

KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON

By FRANK W. WALTON

LIBRARIAN OF THE COLLEGE

Photographs by Edgar Payne

KING'S COLLEGE does not obtrude itself on notice as a prominent landmark among the great public edifices of the metropolis. The wayfarer, wending Citywards from Charing Cross, will probably

truth in the well of Kashan, the College is hidden away from common view, and exacts a special effort of discovery. When at last found, the building is seen to form the stately eastern wing of Somersct House.



THE EXTERIOR: VIEW FROM WITHIN THE ENTRANCE FROM THE STRAND.

be more attracted by the central obstruction of the Church of St. Mary-le-Strand, and fail to observe on his right the gateway surmounted by the legend "University of London, King's College." If the wayfarer be passing along the Thames Embankment between the Temple Station of the Metropolitan District Railway and Waterloo Bridge, he may chance to notice a modest signboard indicating an unpretentious entrance to the overhanging mass of buildings and the College precincts. The two approaches have appropriate characteristics--the one is narrow, the other is steep: Χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά. Like

Unlike most other colleges, King's College cannot boast of a long existence, nor does it owe its foundation to some great churchman, prince, or noble. It has not yet celebrated its centenary, for its origin may be traced to a public meeting held in London in 1828. In the Continental countries the more important towns nearly all possess a university or college of university rank, and it is a curious thing that, until the first quarter of the nineteenth century, London--the most important town of England for centuries--was without any such college.

In 1825, University College was founded

on purely secular lines, and it was known at first as "The University of London." There were, however, many people who felt that a university curriculum was not complete without the inclusion of Divinity, and more still who were strongly of opinion that a sound education must go hand-in-hand with sound religious teaching. Prominent among the latter was the Rev. Dr. D'Oyly, Rector of Lambeth, whose energies contributed largely towards the summoning of an important public meeting on June 21, 1828, at the Freemasons' Tavern. The Duke of Wellington was in the chair, and "the meeting," according to *The Times*, "though not quite so numerous as might have been anticipated, was very respectable,

Subsequently, however, a good many of the subscriptions were withdrawn. Lord Winchelsea was at the head of these seceders, and their action was due to dislike of the Duke of Wellington's policy in supporting Catholic emancipation. The Duke was regarded by the old Tories as a deserter, and so strong was the feeling in the matter that Lord Winchelsea published a letter in which he accused Wellington of exhibiting "a show of zeal for the Protestant religion" whilst all the time working for the furtherance of the Roman Catholic cause. This was an insult that the Duke could not tolerate, and, failing to obtain the reparation that he required, he sent a challenge to Lord Winchelsea. The



THE EXTERIOR: VIEW TOWARDS THE STRAND FROM THE EMBANKMENT END.

appearing to consist chiefly of clergymen." The two archbishops, seven bishops, the Speaker, the Lord Mayor, and many other well-known people were present.

Resolutions were passed expressing the desire that a college should be founded in London, in which a good general education should be combined with religious teaching according to the doctrines of the Church of England. It was also decided to request the King to allow the college to be called "King's College, London."

Public subscriptions were invited, and at a second meeting, held in May, 1829, it was announced that £127,000 had been received.

provocation was felt by Wellington to be extreme, for this was the first occasion in his whole life on which he demanded "satisfaction." The meeting took place in March, 1829, in Battersea Fields. The Duke fired to one side, Lord Winchelsea in the air; an apology in writing was given on the spot, and so the duel ended. Thus the financial prospects of the College were none too bright at the outset.

The next question was the position. An application was made to the Government for the grant of the vacant site at the east end of Somerset House. This met with success, the sole condition being that the College

buildings should fall in with the original design of Sir William Chambers for the completion of the river-front of Somerset House. The site was selected because "it seemed desirable, since it held a central position and had facilities of access from every quarter." Sir Robert Smirke, who designed the British Museum, was entrusted with the work, and the College was sufficiently advanced to be ready for opening in October, 1831.

Meanwhile a charter of incorporation had been obtained, in which King's was established "as a College in which instruction in the doctrines and duties of Christianity as

strongly emphasised at the beginning of its career.

At first there were but three Departments—the Department of General Literature and Science, the Medical Department, and the School. Seven years later, in 1838, the Engineering Department, or Department of Applied Sciences, was established, under the fresh stimulus of the growth of the railway system. Next year (1839) the Hospital was added—the necessary complement to the Medical School. It was established at first in Portugal Street, in what had been at one time a workhouse. Enough funds were, however, collected by 1852 to enable the building of



THE GREAT HALL.

taught by the Church of England should be for ever combined with other branches of useful education." And in the inaugural sermon (October 8, 1831), the Bishop of London dwelt specially on the advantages and the necessity of combining religious instruction with general education. "This combination," said *The Times*, "he spoke of as the chief characteristic of the institution—as the principle upon which its usefulness depended, and without which neither those persons who were to be entrusted with the care of the pupils could venture to discharge their important duties, nor the public be secure that the object for which it was established could be attained." The purpose of the founders of the College was thus

a regular hospital to begin, and in 1861 the work was finished. The new institution was also in Portugal Street, and soon became of great importance. It was close to Holborn and the Strand, it supplied the needs of a densely crowded locality, and it was built in accordance with the latest theories of hospital construction. No one could foresee that in fifty years' time the slums of Clare Market and Drury Lane would practically disappear, and that the district would become so depopulated as to render the presence of a hospital almost unnecessary. And yet all this has happened, and a second new hospital, again built with the latest improvements, has just been opened in Camberwell. In its new locality the Hospital,

still bearing its old name, supplies a need that had for a long time been very pressing. There was no large general hospital nearer than St. Thomas's or Guy's, and the district is a poor and thickly populated one. The Hospital will probably in the future become one of the largest in London, and the Medical School is bound to keep up its brilliant reputation for teaching and research, Sir Watson Cheyne and Sir David Ferrier are still members of its staff.

Strangely enough, it was not until 1847—sixteen years after the opening of the College, and more than twenty years after its projection—that the Theological Department was established. There had always been theological teaching to all the students, but it had been restricted to the simple weekly Divinity lectures of the Principal. The Theological Department took higher ground, offering systematic training for Holy orders by professors, and opening its doors to non-graduates as well as to graduates. In 1856 the College recognised the intellectual wants of young people engaged through the day, and able to attend instruction only in the evening. To meet their case, the Council established a system of evening classes, which was really the first attempt made in London to provide university teaching for students of this type. These classes met with great success, and continued to be a dominant

department of the College for many years. Though they suffered to some extent from the competition of the Polytechnics, they still do first-rate work, especially in German and Psychology, and in the great evening school for Diplomas in English Literature. About the same time, owing to the reorganisation of the Civil Service, special classes for the preparation of candidates were instituted. These formed eventually a very flourishing part of the College, and from the day classes was evolved the Strand School, which came to occupy the rooms vacated by King's College School on its removal to Wimbledon Common.

It was in 1877 that the College proposed to establish a system of education for women, though not directly in connection with the institution. At that time its constitution did not authorise it to set up branch col-



THE CHAPEL.

leges, nor yet to admit women as students. The lectures to women, accordingly, were given at Kensington by members of the College staff, acting under the sanction of the Council. They proved eminently successful, and the Act of 1882 brought the courses within the ordinary operations of the College. These classes were developed into what was known at first as the Ladies' Department, and later the Women's Department. It is now called King's College for Women, and has been for long an important and successful

women's college. Owing, however, to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, the Women's College is shortly to undergo very drastic changes. The Household and Social Science Department, which has recently been so successfully developed, is to be moved to new buildings on Campden Hill, and will become a special department of the University. The Arts and Science Faculties will be transferred to King's College in the Strand. The present house in Kensington Square will be vacated, and Kensington will, of course, lose its women's

The reconstitution of the University in 1900 led to numerous changes in the College. In the past the work had not been directed particularly towards the University of London: the College had mapped out its own courses of study—at any rate, for those students who formally matriculated—and had conferred its diploma of Associate of the College on the completion of the three years' course (two years in the Theological Department). Many students took the College course, and then proceeded to Oxford or Cambridge to take their



THE LIBRARY.

college. These are formidable changes indeed, but it is certain that the Arts Faculty, which has been steadily increasing during the last few years, will continue its progressive course in the Strand, where it will, moreover, have many advantages unattainable in its old quarters in Kensington. In 1887 the Department of General Literature and Science was divided up, a special Department of Science, as distinct from Applied Science, being then founded. The pressure towards this step came from the expansion of the study of natural science, and its increasing importance at the Universities.

degrees. But now that the College became a constituent member of the University, the nature of the teaching was necessarily altered, and was arranged mainly with a view to the students taking the London degrees. Then, in 1903, the compulsory declaration of membership of the Church of England, required till then of all members of the Council and of all the College staff, was abolished by Act of Parliament, an exception being, of course, made in the case of Professors and Lecturers in the Theological Faculty. Finally, in 1910, following the example of University



THE UPPER CORRIDOR.

College, King's was incorporated in the University, the Theological Faculty naturally excepted. The new Hospital, with its school for advanced medical studies, became a separate institution; the School on Wimbledon Common, which was removed from the Strand in 1897, and which has educated so many famous men, received a governing body of its own; the Civil Service Department moved into quarters of its own in Kingsway; whilst the Strand School, taken over by the London County Council, began its new life at Brixton in the autumn of last year.

There thus remain under the same roof the Faculties of Arts, Science (including Medical Science), Law, and Engineering, which have been transferred to

the University, and the Theological Department, which still belongs to the old governing body of the College. This arrangement works very well. On the one hand, all the students can, if they wish, attend the daily service in the chapel and the weekly theological lecture, the original purpose of the College being thus preserved. On the other hand, the theological students, by their daily intercourse with those of the other Faculties in common-room debates, social unions, and games, gain a broader outlook than they would be likely to obtain in one of the purely theological colleges.

The professional staff of King's have always been very distinguished. Of the many eminent names of the past may be mentioned F. D. Maurice, J. S. Brewer, C. H. Pearson, S. R. Gardiner, Sir Charles Wheatstone, Clerk Maxwell, Sir Charles Lyell, Archbishop Trench, Thorold Rogers, Sir W. Fergusson, Sir W. Bowman, Sir W. O. Priestley, and Lord Lister. The Principals of the College have, for the most part, obtained high preferment in the Church: four have become bishops, and one a dean. And the present staff fully maintain the high standard of the past. Professor Halliburton, who holds the chair of Physiology, Professor Gollancz that of English, and the veteran Sir John Laughton that of Modern History, are eminent and widely known men, whilst the new Principal, Dr. Burrows, occupies a distinguished position in the field of Classical Archaeology.



THE ENTRANCE HALL.

The College has, moreover, just lost Professor Barkla, who has been elected to the Chair of Natural Philosophy at Edinburgh, perhaps the most important professorship in that subject in the British Islands. His brilliant research work at King's carried on the traditions of Wheatstone and Clerk Maxwell.

King's possesses valuable libraries, museums, and laboratories. In addition to the general library, there are the Marsden Library of Oriental books, and the collection formed by Sir Charles Wheatstone, formerly Professor of Physics in the College. Quite

use of students" ; and, indeed, according to the belief of Dr. Wace, a former Principal, "the only one existing at that date was at the Sorbonne in Paris." Sir Charles Wheatstone's own work at the College is of great historical interest. Tradition has it that the first electric message ever sent in England was sent from the laboratory at King's across the Thames ; and, though this has been doubted, the fact remains that King's College was the scene of some of Wheatstone's most important work. Many of the laboratories have been recently



THE GEORGE III. MUSEUM : PHYSICS.

recently the greater part of the libraries of the late Professor Skeat and Dr. F. T. Furnivall have been presented to the English Department, and form a separate collection.

Attached to the Physical Department is the George III. Museum, containing the collection of models and instruments formed by that Sovereign and presented to the College by her late Majesty Queen Victoria. The Wheatstone Laboratory for Science, established in 1868 mainly by the efforts of Professor Grylls Adams, is said to have been "the first founded in England for the special

enlarged and refitted, and only a year ago the Departments of Bacteriology and Public Health were transferred to larger and more convenient quarters at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School.

The Medical Science Faculty has increased considerably within the last few years. A large number of students come to King's to complete their preliminary and intermediate studies, and then pass on to one or other of the hospitals to do their clinical work : in the last session more than 160 of such students were being trained at the College.

The Engineering Department is a large

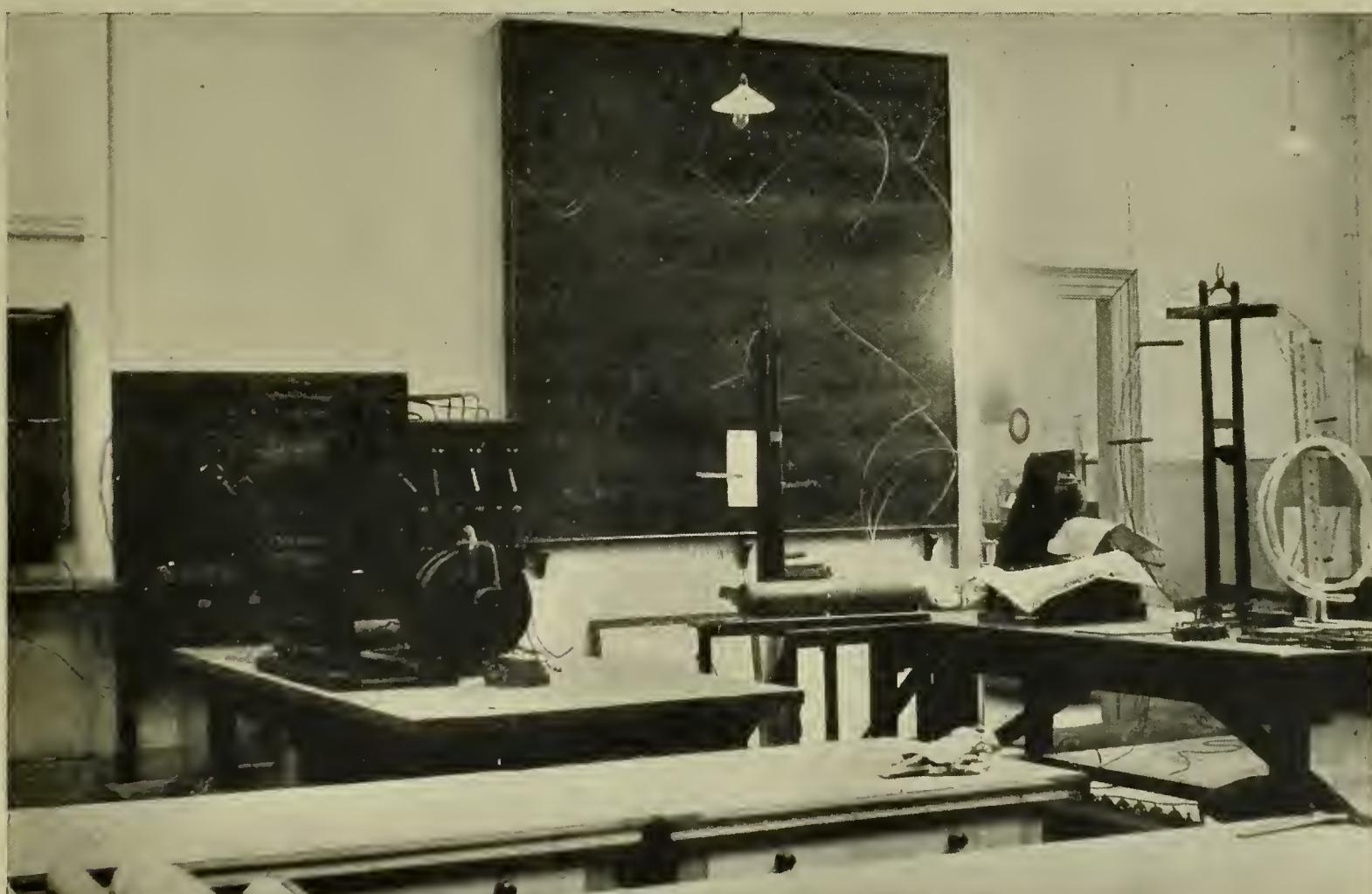


THE PHYSIOLOGICAL LABORATORY.

and prosperous one, and it is of interest to remember that it is one of the oldest in the Kingdom. The Siemens Electrical Engineering Laboratory was also one of the first of its kind to be opened in London. Owing to the recent removal of the Strand School, the Engineering Faculty has been enabled to extend its quarters, and it has

now a large and well-fitted drawing office on the ground floor ; the workshops and engine-rooms are in the basement.

A hall of residence has recently been opened in South London for medical and engineering students. It is known as "The Platanes," and is situated on Champion Hill, close to King's College Hospital. It is a



THE SIEMENS ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING LABORATORY.

large house, standing in its own grounds of about one and a half acres, providing very comfortable quarters at a reasonable charge, and it will certainly be appreciated by many students, who enjoy a common life with all its attendant advantages.

The Faculty of Arts includes a Day Training Department for Teachers, which was started in 1890, and was at that time one of the first so-called "Day Colleges" instituted by the Education Authority. The College receives about fifty King's Scholars, who first of all go through a general course preparing them for a university degree, and then

and official requirements and to the facilitation of colloquial intercourse of Oriental countries." The combined organisation is analogous to the schools of living Oriental languages in France, Germany, and Austria-Hungary, only these are supported by the State and offer instruction gratuitously, and the State thinks itself amply repaid in commercial returns. It is probable that before long the newly-projected London School of Oriental Studies will relieve the two colleges of these duties.

The law teaching is also shared by University College, King's College, and the



THE UNITED COMMON ROOM.

undergo the necessary technical training. There is also a post-graduate course, directed to the Teacher's Diploma of the University of London, and intended for those who propose to work in secondary schools.

The teaching of Oriental and Colonial languages is at present shared by University College and King's College. University College provides the classes for all Oriental languages especially required by students qualifying for examinations for the Indian Civil Service. King's College provides the classes for modern Oriental languages other than the Indian languages—classes of a practical rather than academic character, having "particular reference to commercial

School of Economics. Under this inter-collegiate scheme lectures are given at all three colleges, and the students attending them are allowed the use of the three libraries.

The Theological Faculty, still under the rule of the old Council, but ranking as a school of the University, is in a very flourishing condition. It contains more than 200 students, and a fair number take the B.D. degree of the University as well as the Associateship of the College. Last autumn a new Theological Hostel was opened in Vincent Square, which at present accommodates about fifty students. As the building progresses, there will be room for more. This



THE UPPER CHEMICAL LABORATORY.

hostel replaces the old one in Mecklenburgh Square, which had existed since 1902, but had become quite unable to meet the increasing demand for community life.

The number of students who take the degree or diploma courses is steadily growing.

At the beginning of the present academic year there was a rise of 95 in the number of new students so entering, and there is every prospect of the increase continuing. Then, in addition to the students following the regular courses of the various Faculties,



THE LOWER CHEMICAL LABORATORY.

there are a large number of occasional students, who attend one or more special courses. Last year, in the Faculty of Arts, there were 213 occasional students ; the teachers' classes, organised by the London County Council, were attended by 346 men and women ; the Gilbert Lectures on Banking, by 800 clerks from the various banks.

An important feature of late has been the establishment of public lectures that are delivered at the College. These are quite free, and are advertised in the daily papers ; detailed lists are posted in the College hall, and can also be obtained in the Secretary's office. Quite recently an important series was given on Colonial and Imperial problems ; all the lecturers were distinguished men, and on each occasion the chair was taken by some statesman or other public person.

There are various College societies, all of which are well supported by the students. The most important is the Union Society, which has for its objects : "To promote social intercourse amongst its members and throughout the College, the success of students' clubs, and the interests of students generally." The various athletic clubs are affiliated to it and are controlled by it ; it arranges also for the holding of the annual athletic sports, and provides debates from time to time. The Engineering Society has flourished ever since 1847, when it was founded for the purpose of reading papers on scientific and engineering subjects. There are also Theological, Educational, and Sociological Societies. The "King's College Review," which comes out every term, and has now been in existence for many years, seems likely to continue its successful career.

King's provides two companies of the Infantry Battalion of the London University

Contingent of the Officers' Training Corps : "B" Company is recruited from the Engineering Faculty, "E" Company from the other Faculties. The officer commanding the University contingent is, moreover, a Professor of the College.

The work of the College has always been carried on under disadvantageous financial conditions. The College started without an endowment, and it has never been able to acquire anything approaching an adequate one. From time to time sums of money have been given for definite purposes, and sums have also been raised for improvements in the College and for the repayment of debt. Grants are, of course, received from the Government and from the County Council ; but the fact remains that the College has persistently carried out excellent work under circumstances which have always been difficult and have at times become acute.

King's will probably, within the next few years, undergo further important and far-reaching changes. The recently issued Final Report of the Royal Commission on University Education in London favours the formation of a university quarter, and recommends that the Central University buildings and King's College should be moved to sites in that quarter. The College may then be compelled to leave its old home and its old associations of eighty-five years, and to start afresh in new surroundings. But it is quite certain that King's College, including its Theological Faculty, whatever the future may have in store for it, will continue to carry on its old traditions of sound learning and high principle, and will take its share in the further development of the University, so that the latter may at length become worthy of London, the greatest city of the Empire.

A further article in this series will deal with the later developments of the reconstituted University of London.

